

THE TIMES
LITERARY SUPPLEMENT
T.L.S.
INDEX
OF BOOKS
REVIEWED

Arts:
J. Burnham: *Beyond Modern Sculpture* ... 124
A. Hill: *Edvard Munch* ... 124
E. von Witzleben: *French Stained Glass* ... 124

Biography and Memoirs:
A. M. Kiki: *Kiki: Ten Thousand Years in a Lifetime* ... 136
C. Mackenzie: *My Life and Times* ... 131
J. C. Trewin: *Robert Donat* ... 131
B. Willey: *Cambridge and other Memoirs, 1920-1931* ... 131
J. B. Wolf: *Lucius VII* ... 128

Classical Studies:
A. S. F. Gray and D. L. Page (Editors): *The Greek Anthology* ... 141
B. Saklatvala: *Sappho of Lesbos* ... 141
A. Watson: *The Law of Persons in the Later Roman Republic* ... 141

Fiction:
M. Bhikem: *Next Season* ... 125
W. Garner: *The Us and Them War* ... 129
B. Guy-Lussac: *L'Ami* ... 129
S. Hill: *Gentleman and Ladies* ... 129
H. R. F. Keating: *Inspector Ghote Plays a Joke* ... 129
M. Miller: *The Warm Feeling* ... 125
J. Poole: *The Lilywhite Boys* ... 129
R. Stout: *The Father Hunt* ... 129
T. Wheeler: *The Conjunction* ... 125

History:
P. Barr: *The Deer Cry Pavilion* ... 126
C. R. Bayly: *The Modern History of Mongolia* ... 121
S. Bonnet: *The Price of Admiralty* ... 121
R. Chaffin and B. Ripley: *The Mines Association* ... 130
S. de Gramont: *Epiphany for Kings* ... 129
Literature and Literary Criticism:
The *Baconian Book of Limericks* ... 133
W. S. Baring-Gould: *The Love of the Limerick* ... 133
H. De Vill: *There was a Young Lady* ... 133
W. Fossile: *Climate of Violence* ... 127
J. L. Peacock: *Rites of Modernization* ... 127

Medicine:
A. B. Carter: *All about Strokes* ... 138

Politics:
R. S. H. Hinton: *Poetry of the Future* ... 138
F. von Opel: *Zwischen Schatten und Licht* ... 138
V. von Thun: *Wolfspeil* ... 138

Religion:
D. D. Edwards: *John Calvinism* ... 138

Social Studies:
M. Barthes: *Historie de l'Homme* ... 138
J. Taver: *Danish* ... 138
M. Spence: *1 Gallery of Dudes* ... 138
K. Saxe: *Parisian* ... 138
R. Wood: *Children, 1774-1900* ... 138

Travel:
D. Murphy: *In Ethiopia with a Mule* ... 138
A. Thwaite: *The Deserts of Hesperides* ... 138

World Affairs:
I. Barnes: *African Renaissance* ... 138
G. Faldut: *Revolutionary Warfare and Communist Strategy* ... 138
H. G. Celler: *The Australian-American Alliance* ... 138
L. C. B. Gower: *Independent Africa* ... 138
G. Gwynne and N. Harper (Editors): *Australia in World Affairs, 1961-1963* ... 138
R. F. Kennedy: *13 Days: The Cuban Missile Crisis* ... 138
S. M. Makings: *Agricultural Problems in Developing Countries in Africa* ... 138

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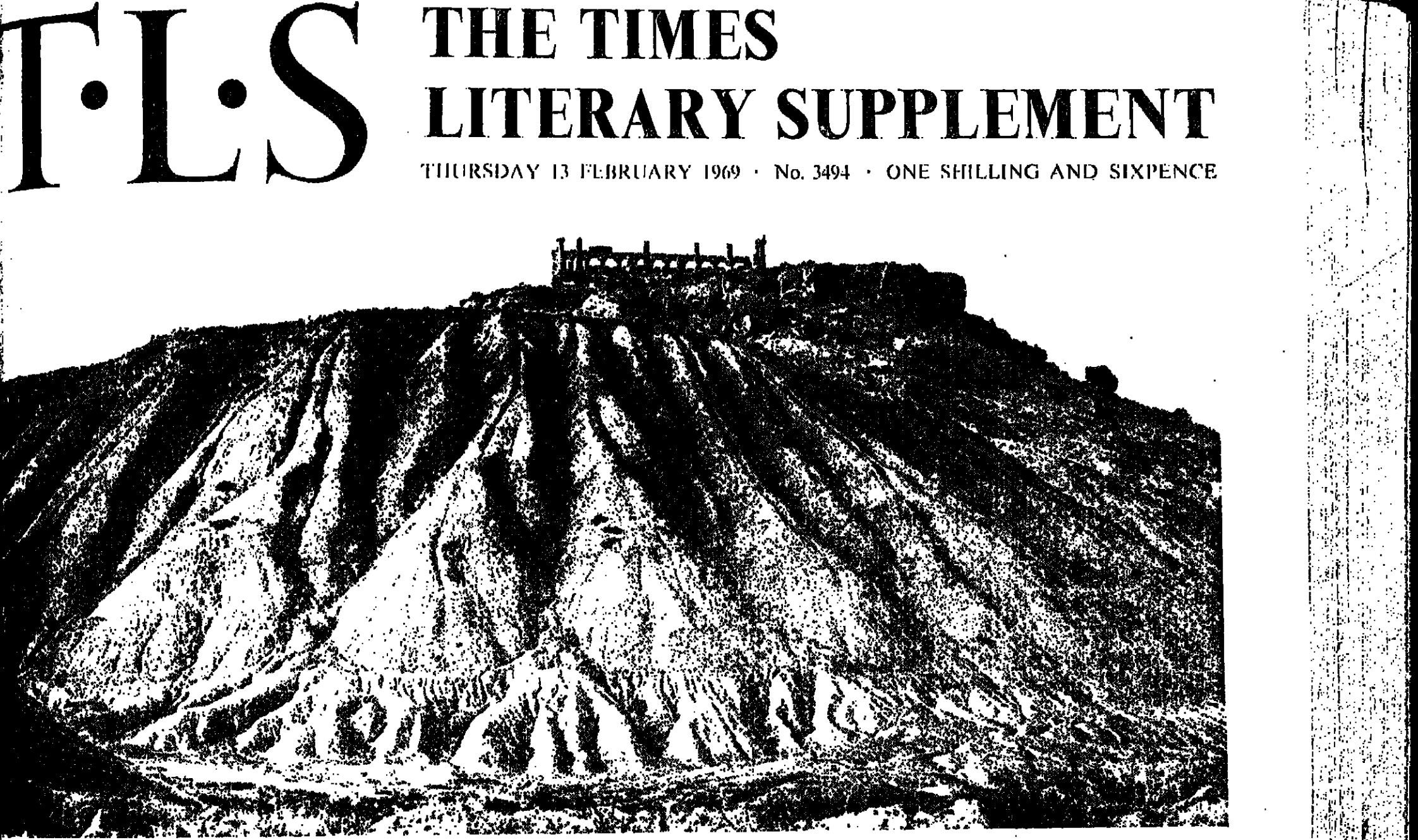
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Land crossin below a Greek temple at Agrigento, from A History of Sicily.

Ancient and modern Sicily
A TERRIFYING INSULARITY OF MIND

Mr. Mack Smith tells us that: "When Marquis Regalmici was delayed to carry urgent business to the north, he insisted on waiting until he had had with appropriate dignity a large and brilliant dinner. At this point, halfway through a *libbi* of Sicily, the reader is well to recognize in such an attitude much more than mere aristocratic insularity. It may even be said that the Sicilian, in his sentence sounds another note on the same bizarre and antique tune. When Goethe of Palermo asked why no one swept up the dung in the street, the answer came that the Bey of Tunis when he sued for the ransom promised him by a Sicilian magnate whom he had captured at sea. In the nineteenth century the *droit de seigneur* had not disappeared; it is not stated in these books, but perhaps this made a small contribution to social hatreds, in that peasants taking part in the revolt of 1860 burned their gentry alive and ate their roast livers. Eighty years later the island was never again to be ruled by a monarch, yet it produced a partisan movement. In Palma di Montecarlo in 1939 there were 700 rooms shared by 3,404 human beings and 5,085 animals; this was at the end of the decade in which 10 per cent of the whole island's population emigrated. And so on, and so on. Even the dialect is odd: it has no future tense. The monstrous is always to be found, lurking just behind the odd and picturesque in Sicily and Sicilian history—or, rather, they are inseparably intertwined. This makes Sicilian history difficult to come to terms with; it is un-European. In addition, for at least the past thousand years, it is decreasingly comprehensible in the terms of any outside civilization. This exoticism is its strongest claim to be a subject in its own right, but it is also the main challenge which any would-be historian of the island must face.

The right place to begin is with Mr. Finley: as he says, Sicily is an island. Rightly interpreted, this should jolt us out of nineteenth-century assumptions that we are dealing with a part of Italy, and therefore with Italian history. The Italian political connexion has been sporadic; Greece, Carthage, Byzantium, the Arabs, Spain—and even, briefly, the British—have counted too, some for just as much, or more. The separation from Italy is prohibitive, for geologists say that Sicily was never attached by land to Italy (or to Africa). Instead it

has always been a place apart, an island which is a rough isosceles triangle, toppled on its side. The land is on the average higher in its northern half than in the southern. There is a thin coastal plain on the south coast, and a deeper one behind Catania. The mountains impede cross-island communication; apart from Etna, the highest rises about 6,000 feet. It is a big, loosely integrated area, whose earliest long-distance communications have until recently always been in its coastal waters and whose biggest cities have been seaports. They opened on the whole Mediterranean: the island is two miles from Italy, eighty from Malta, 100 from Africa, 200 from Naples or Sardinia, 500 from Crete.

"Both a gateway and a crossroads" is Mr. Finley's characterization of what this implies. Sicily is at the junction of the two sea claims: discerned by Professor Braudel; it has sometimes held open the communications between them, and sometimes cut them. This position, more than any other fact, must have differentiated Sicily's fate from that of, say, Sardinia, another conservative and inward-looking island, but one less inviting to disturbance from the outside. But the description hardly takes us far enough. Outwards and crossroads must lead somewhere, and Sicily has sometimes been a slightly post too. It has also been a gateway to lost, a cockpit, and a place of refuge (of which the latest version has been, like other Mediterranean islands, in the role of unshakable aircraft-carrier). The crossroads image seems most valid when Sicily is considered as a meeting place. Always open to invasion, it was at tempting a target as it was a springboard: the first European invasion of Africa was launched from there in 310 B.C., and the Anglo-American break-in to Europe began there in A.D. 1943. One of the

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ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

- On Max Raphael and Marc Chagall page 148
- Saul Bellow's stories 149
- "Great Trials": Jesus of Nazareth 155
- Closing the Books—leading article 156
- The French views of the United States 157
- The Affluent Worker and other social phenomena 160
- Deceit and the Swallows, by Richard Garnett 161

Letters on authors' rights and part-publishing; Freud and Shakespeare; "Hydro-space" &c.

Marble chips

ROBERT PINSKY: *Laudor's Poetry*. 179pp. University of Chicago Press. £3.2s.

Perennially fascinating as a character, Laudor as a writer is perhaps not much read nowadays. Yet he is wonderful in small doses, and some of the sentences from the *Conversations* and a handful of his short poems and epigrams remain to haunt us through a lifetime. Why then do we stop there? Is it because, as Mr. Raymond Mortimer once suggested, "wisdom and beauty require the alloy of a baser metal"? Or is it because, as Laudor himself observed, "I wrote chiefly to occupy the vacant hour, caring not a straw for popularity, and little more for fame"? Whatever the reason for this comparative neglect, Professor Robert Pinsky sets out in *Laudor's Poetry* to demonstrate that we are the losers by it. Guided a little by the fingerprints already erected by Ezra Pound and Donald Davie, he here deploys before us a detailed analysis of the essence and nature of Laudor's work in poetry. The way he does this is to provide a number of closely-reasoned discussions of why certain selected pieces triumphantly "come off"; "Rose Aylmer" for instance, gets some four pages to its eight lines, and other poems treated at commensurate length are the "Fiesolan Idyl" and "To My Child Carlino", for which last Professor Pinsky makes the rather surprising claim that it is a better poem than Wordsworth's "Intimations of Immortality".

Laudor's Poetry is, manifestly, addressed to those who are working, or are about to work, on the subject. Professor Pinsky says: "I believe that the job for students of Laudor's poetry is not to reform 'our' estimate of Laudor, for so far as such things can be determined in the absence of a poetic Stock Exchange, that estimate seems to me to be quite high. The job rather is to discover and implement ways of approaching and discussing Laudor's work. He is on enough of the better syllabuses. . . . Laudor's own reaction to those 'better syllabuses' is a point upon

which the imagination almost ceases to function. One can only envisage a thunderbolt such as the unfamiliar couplet which celebrated his wife's driving him from his Fiesolan domain:

An angel from his Paradise drove Adam;
From mine a devil drove me—thank you, Madam.

This, however, is not in the least to say that *Laudor's Poetry*, academic in form as it so properly is, does not contain most excellent things. Professor Pinsky has, to begin with, the blessed quality of knowing his own mind, so that he is not afraid, for example, to say he thinks "Christy" a bad poem and to give his reasons for thinking so, and it must always be a pleasure to read a man who knows his subject thoroughly: his citation from Robert Frost on "Nature I loved, and next to Nature, Art" indicates well the width of his terms of reference—

... you say that in college nomenclature the only meaning possible for Nature in Laudor's quatrain would be Pretty Scenery.

Which makes opposing it to Art absurd . . . and what we feel as especially happy in his nomenclature is the reiterated use of the term "a reclaimable truism" to define those philosophical commonplaces that are the necessary subjects of Laudor's (and indeed of everyone else's) epigrams on the eternal questions of love and death and mutability. In these matters, as Professor Pinsky points out, the form is everything, the content only that which is common to all men—"what off was thought, but ne'er so well expressed". The parallel with Houman, that other indefatigable classicist, is obvious.

Hard as it is, in parts, *Laudor's Poetry* is a book that will repay study, though it is, alas, possible that, by the time we have reached its end, the majority of us will have reverted to our Lamb-like ululations of "Rose Aylmer", to the almost total neglect of the longer if somewhat marmoreal masterpieces that Professor Pinsky so rightly extols.

Critical correspondence

MARTIN SEYMOUR-SMITH: *Poets Through Their Letters*. Volume 1. 464pp. Constable. £3.3s.

Mr. Martin Seymour-Smith's publishers affirm that the undertaking in his book, a survey of poets from Wyatt to Coleridge through the medium of their letters, is unique. If it is, perhaps it is for other reasons than that nobody thought of it before. Certainly the idea is a lively and engaging one, and if it were possible for all the poets as it is on some, it would make a charmingly oblique history of poetry. It is hard enough, however, for a study of a poet's personality to illumine his work, and harder still when the study of the personality is drawn from a third source. The triad of letters, post, work, increases the difficulty and multiplies the possibilities of compounding error. Apart from the theoretical problems, there are particular ones which Mr. Seymour-Smith very fairly points out himself. Milton's insufferably tedious letters "tell us scarcely anything about him and nothing about his poetry". Wordsworth struggled throughout his life with a violent aversion to letter writing and his stiff letters "give little account of his inner life". Some poets left too few letters, some too many. The nineteen surviving letters of Ben Jonson "tell us less about his personality than about some of the difficulties in which he was involved", whereas the more than four hundred letters of Marvell leave him more enigmatic than ever: "These offer perhaps fewer clues to the real nature of the man, to his beliefs and his motives, than his poems."

So wide a survey of so many poets requires, if it is to be in proportion, an unusual degree of detachment. Mr. Seymour-Smith allows his personal response to some of these poets to be dominated by a leading idea or a negative feeling. His treatment of Wordsworth is overwhelmed by F. W. Bateson's theory of the half or hardly suppressed incestuous relationship with Dorothy (there are several incidental severities about Mrs. Mooreman's naivety, although it is possible that her attitude may be ascribed to lack of conviction rather than of sophistication); while his account of Pope reveals a genuine distaste both for the man and the poetry. The artificiality of Pope's letters and his machinations about their publication help only to confirm an original want of sympathy with Pope's art. "If poetry consisted of nothing more than taste, then Pope would be as important as his admirers claim."

If there are occasions, then, when the nature of the material thwarts the intention which assembled it, or when a clouded intention distorts the material itself, there are others when, with a sufficient volume of letters and a more spontaneous sympathy on the part of the author, the method justifies itself. This is particularly true of the treatment of Swift, Crabbe, Gray and Coleridge. Here the letters are illuminating, about both the man and the poetry. The Swift essay shows a sympathetic understanding of the poet's physical disability and his strange sensibility, of that condition of "labyrinthine vertigo" which existed both in the middle ear and in the imagination. Mr. Seymour-Smith is particularly good on Swift's aim towards absolute but sardonic realism within the limits of correctness, and on a quality infrequently remarked on, namely his range, which stretched from the trifling sadness of the conclusion to the "Ode to Temple" to the robust grimace

of "A Description of a City". He is as sensitive to Coleridge's sexual despair and to the sexual desire of both these writers as to the personality, these are the best essays in the book. And no one of course, will be wrong with Coleridge, who is level with the headlong unstoppability of the trial could be minimized so close in manner to the procedures of Coleridge's poetry. The thesis is not new, the centre of Coleridge's poetry was once part of modernist strife between a poetic sexuality and a horror of sex. If he seems indistinctly to have in the Gospels a Christian theology is not fact make too little of the principle of Coleridge's poetry.

Poets Through Their Letters is first volume of a projected series of a form of writing, English is so rich, but only as a realization of the author's intention. "I have considered myself as correspondence means of elucidating the those who wrote it." When they are frequently released sometimes illuminating nature of the poetry; when not, they are seldom never the other. In any case, they are hardly enough in the category, at least between Coleridge, to sustain so study. When for a particular enough material of the does exist, Mr. Seymour-Smith is fine when he is engaged, less than they are not.

God and the Flesh

PIERRE JEAN JOUVE: *Poésie IV*. 247pp. Paris: Mercure de France. 29.80 fr. *An Idiom of Night*. Selected and Translated by Keith Bosley. 80pp. Rapp and Whitling. 21s. (Paperback, 16s.).

YVES BONNEFOY: *Selected Poems*. Translated by Antony Rudolf. Cape Editions. 21s. (Paperback, 7s. 6d.).

Mercur de France have now published the fourth and last volume of their new edition of Jouve's poetry. The set includes nearly all his most important verse, with the exception of *Le Paradis Perdu* and *Génie*. The serious student will, however, still have to refer to the original editions because, in publishing what is no Renaissance neo-Stoics to have been determined to omit a few poems to which presumably no longer satisfy him.

The publication of this collected edition is timely. It places in perspective the achievement of more than forty years of intensive poetic effort and it comes at a time when Jouve's poetry is beginning to be appreciated outside France. This is not to say that it has ever had a wide audience

inside France. The difficulty and obscurity of much of his poetry and its apparent isolation from contemporary fashions have been serious obstacles to its popularity.

The reader is further disconcerted by an odd fitness, which probably derives, at least in part, from the fact that this deeply subjective poetry is rigidly controlled by an intellect determined to achieve and maintain its lucidity. One must be careful, however, not to exaggerate the intellectual quality of Jouve's poetry. The mind controls and guides Jouve's poetic exploration of the world within and around him, but recognizes that this world exists in its own right. Applying a similar method, Yves Bonnefoy, the French poet who has perhaps been most deeply influenced by Jouve, achieves a very different result. Bonnefoy's intellect not only controls his poetic world, it also creates it. Both poets are travellers engaged in an arduous quest for the absolute but, while Jouve's itinerary takes him across the vital, real terrain of the subconscious erotic self, Bonnefoy's, for all his efforts to the contrary, remains primarily intellectual. The "reality" he explores is largely an illusion created by the intellect, which finally eludes the reader, and perhaps the poet himself, because of its abstraction.

The fourth volume of the Mercur de France edition contains poetry published between 1956 and 1966, ending with a few previously unpublished poems. It is the poetry of an aging man, for Jouve was seventy-one in 1956, but this does not imply that it is the poetry of a declining talent. On the contrary, it reflects a poetic insight which is as vigorous as ever. What it does perhaps lack is the dramatic quality of his earlier mature poetry, from *Les Noces* to *Matinée Céleste*, for those were the great years of Jouve's quest for a reconciliation between carnal love and love of God. A reconciliation finally achieved, as he indicates in *Matinée Céleste*, through the notions of death and absence.

In the poetry of *Mélo-drame* and *Moire*, Jouve continues to explore these basic themes, but it is, nevertheless, the poetry of

"A Description of a City". He is as sensitive to Coleridge's sexual despair and to the sexual desire of both these writers as to the personality, these are the best essays in the book. And no one of course, will be wrong with Coleridge, who is level with the headlong unstoppability of the trial could be minimized so close in manner to the procedures of Coleridge's poetry. The thesis is not new, the centre of Coleridge's poetry was once part of modernist strife between a poetic sexuality and a horror of sex. If he seems indistinctly to have in the Gospels a Christian theology is not fact make too little of the principle of Coleridge's poetry.

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Jesus as a rebel against Rome

F. BRANDON: *The Trial of Jesus*. 223pp. 12s.

Professor Brandon's book is an attempt to present the facts so that the Roman trial could be minimized so close in manner to the procedures of Coleridge's poetry. The thesis is not new, the centre of Coleridge's poetry was once part of modernist strife between a poetic sexuality and a horror of sex. If he seems indistinctly to have in the Gospels a Christian theology is not fact make too little of the principle of Coleridge's poetry.

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Theological splashes

TEILHARD DE CHARDIN: *Letters to Lontine Zanta*. Translated by Bernard Wall. 127pp. 12s.

It can be claimed that the two prefaces of letters by Teilhard de Chardin (Letters from a Traveller) are the most interesting of his work. The letters are written mainly from China in the years 1923 to 1936 from such addresses as "An Inn in the depths of the Shansi", but there are a few later ones written in Paris. As for the subject-matter, the most interesting references are to the discovery of *Sinanthropus* in 1929. Teilhard was clearly excited by it and fully realized what he and his fellow-

theological reasons. We can easily accept that the authors sometimes made mistakes of fact: they were human and cannot be regarded as mere vehicles of a compulsive and meretricious inspiration. That is one thing; but it is something else altogether to suggest an elaborate conspiracy to distort the facts. It is straining credibility too far to argue that out of this crooked world there arose the Christian religion with its strong emphasis on the Good Life, or to ignore the fact that the theology of the Atonement proved to be a means towards that Good Life and experience of the love of God. We have no business to be asked to agree that behind all this there lay a sorry affair of faked records, which when they are examined by modern scholars reveal a story so different that Christianity can only be dismissed as a mistake.

What happened in the trial of Jesus is really plain in all the Gospels. The age was one of much messianic talk in which the hope took two forms: it was to be either a rebellion in arms led by the Messiah against the occupying power, or it would be a miraculous appearance of the Messiah who would lead the hosts of

heaven against the kings of the earth in a final battle, after which there would be the Last Judgment and an era of everlasting peace when the Mosaic Law would be universal. To the Jewish leaders, Jesus was a dis-appointing on either view, a wandering teacher raising no army and unattended by any host of heaven; but he was sitting loose to the Law, and with his large popular following he seemed clearly a religious and socially subversive person, and in view of the messianic speculation about him an obvious danger to the peace which Rome expected the Sanhedrin to preserve. To the Roman authorities, and they were almost certainly well informed, Jesus would seem a potential danger, someone on whom an eye should be kept, but not much more.

It is evident in each of the Gospels that the Jewish authorities were increasingly alarmed about him, and the Palm Sunday entrance, accepted by the crowd as a messianic progress, determined them to act. Jesus indicated to them that he could be found in the garden of Gethsemane, but why he did so remains an unsolved puzzle. So as to involve the Roman authority, they reported to Pilate that he would be found in arms, and pos-

sibly after Palm Sunday they thought to help the Temple police with the arrest. When news reached Annas, the retired High Priest, that the arrest had been effected without difficulty, he saw that the charge of "a rebel in arms" had broken down, and he had Jesus brought to him in the hope that he could reconstruct the case before it went to the Sanhedrin at daybreak. He worked on the report that Jesus had threatened to destroy the Temple, but failed to get effective witnesses, an odd fact which seems to suggest some probability in John's dating of the event. The Sanhedrin when it met fastened on the charge that Jesus had claimed to be the Messiah, and that was the charge which they sent to Pilate—in arms or not, a false Messiah was a rebel.

Pilate was understandably suspicious. He had been in official trouble before with these mysterious people, and we can see that his examination of Jesus, which is very well recorded by John, must have deepened his suspicion. He tried to escape by returning the case to the Jewish court, but the Sanhedrin insisted on pressing the charge, and his own standing at Rome was not good enough for another failure, which was what it would be should events prove the charge true after all. There is no critical reason to reject John's account with Jesus telling Pilate that the charge failed because he had not been found in arms, and that his kingdom did not belong to this world; he had been born to be a teacher of truth, Pilate's "What is truth?" far from being a jest as Bacon said, was the exasperated comment of a Roman official summoned in the small hours to deal with a rebel who turned out to be a philosopher. In the end Pilate gave way, and the crucifixion followed.

None of this, which is only a brief outline of the account in the Gospels, is in the least improbable, and the suggestion of an elaborate faking of the records is quite unnecessary. Even a Roman reading the allegedly distorted Gospel narratives would see that Pilate did not emerge satisfactorily from the trial. The major blame might rest with the Sanhedrin, but the official Roman comment on Pilate's share in the affair must have been that it was consistent with the never lived to see his triumph, his thoughts have in the end made a greater impact than they would have done if published in the normal way with an official imprimatur.

Professor Brandon's second line of criticism is that the presentation of

the crucifixion as a sacrificial Atonement is something improperly imposed by Paul on what was historically the simple trial of a rebel leader, a thesis which the Modernists made familiar. Apart from the obvious criticism that the idea appears right through the New Testament, and without opposition, so that it is impossible thus to isolate Paul, it is important to realize that it was thoroughly consistent with the Jewish view of history. On that view the events of history were seen as the manifestation of the activity of God.

The Messiah was not simply a rebel, a John Ball, but was the point towards which the divine ordering of history moved. The events in his life were the uncovering of God's hand, so that he was properly spoken of as God's Son. The crucifixion therefore could not be seen as a simple place of history, but had to be seen as having its place in the divine act that was the Messiah. What was taking place in the human scene, the conflict between good and evil, was also to be seen in the heavenly world, the conflict between the heavenly hosts and demonic powers, and the historical cross was something that belonged also to the eternal world, for there divine love in accepting death, evil's supreme penalty, defeated evil. The Messiah was to be seen as the Suffering Servant of Isaiah, by whose stripes we are healed, making the sacrificial Atonement.

It is very difficult in a few lines to expound this Jewish view of history, but it is essential to understand it if the place of the cross in Christianity is to be properly grasped. We cannot ride away from it by calling it Pauline, for it is profoundly Jewish and it is used constantly in the New Testament. So Judaism saw the meaning of history, and Christianity begins in Judaism. The sceptical scholar may see history as meaningless, and human life as only a dark accident, but Judaism thought differently, and that thought deserves far more careful exposition than Professor Brandon gives it: he might reflect that the view which he dismisses proved itself, and still does so, in the historical experience of the Church.

A brief note on the production of the book: it is handsomely got up, with a bright jacket and many pictures. This might induce a pious aunt to choose it as a nice present for a niece, who will be perplexed to find that it contains heavy, intricate and destructive scholarship.

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How bourgeois are the workers?

JOHN H. GOLDTHORPE, DAVID LOCKWOOD, FRANK BISHOP, JENNIFER PLATT: *The Affluent Worker: Political Attitudes and Behaviour*. 94pp. Cambridge University Press. 30s. (Paperback, 10s.)

The Affluent Worker: Political Attitudes and Behaviour is the second of a series of monographs reporting a sociological study of affluent workers in Luton. The sources of information are the same as for the first report, which examined industrial relations: interviews with 229 manual workers at three Luton firms, aged between twenty-one and forty-six, and regularly

earning at least £17 a week, and with fifty-four white-collar workers at the same firms.

A view of working-class politics that was intellectually fashionable in the 1950s, provides the starting point. It went something like this. The Labour Party was, as part of a long-term process, losing ground among its traditional working-class supporters, because they were becoming more "affluent": having a higher standard of living they no longer thought of themselves as "working-class" but as "middle-class", and accordingly voted Conservative. This was of course part of the wider thesis of "embourgeoisement" that interested Mr. Goldthorpe and his colleagues and led them to carry out

their study: in this volume they discuss its application to politics in particular.

The book sets out step by step to test the stereotype against the research findings—and, to be frank, the authors' own prior belief that the stereotype was false. First, they show that the overwhelming majority of the manual workers interviewed (in 1963-64) had voted Labour in previous elections and intended to do so again; the white-collar people, by contrast, were more often Conservative supporters, though less solidly so. Comparison with the opinion polls shows that the support for Labour was stronger and more stable among these affluent manual workers in Luton than among manual workers in the country as a whole. So on the face of it, the authors conclude, affluence in itself does not make Tories.

Furthermore, the manual workers in Luton who supported Labour mainly did so for "traditional" reasons associated with class interest or loyalty. "I think, if I vote Conservative, what've I got to conserve?"

"As I belong to the working class, I feel it my duty to support any organization that will further the aims of the working class." And so on. However, there were some cracks in this solidarity: nearly half the Labour voters believed that the trade union movement ought to be separated from the Labour Party; few actively discussed politics; and there were hints that many would be fairly ready to switch their allegiance, notwithstanding class loyalties, if they felt that a Labour government was letting them down or a Conservative one might do better for them. There seems to be qualified support for the "embourgeoisement" thesis here, though the authors do not make much of this.

The next question is whether the

manual workers who do vote Conservative are the more affluent ones. The figures suggest that to some extent they are: men with higher earnings less often voted Labour, as did house-owners compared with tenants, and men who thought their standard of living had improved over the previous decade compared with those who thought theirs had not. But these differences, though they showed up, were not dramatic.

What did make a more striking difference to political attitudes was what Mr. Goldthorpe and his colleagues call "group affiliations". Labour support was particularly weak among men whose fathers or fathers-in-law had white-collar jobs, whose wives had them or who had themselves had them in the past. Likewise, the kind of area that people lived in made a great difference, the support for Labour declining sharply from the scale from older "poor" areas to council estates and from council estates to "superior" private suburbs.

This conclusion, and it is an important one, is this: being better-off financially may perhaps in some circumstances weaken a manual worker's support for Labour, but a much greater influence upon political attitudes and behaviour is the set of social relationships that surrounds him: family, relatives and neighbours. Once stated, this seems entirely convincing; people might well be more influenced by personal contacts than by another couple of pounds in their pay packet. And it is one of the achievements of this monograph that it demonstrates this to be so.

Yet at the end one asks what has really happened to the "embourgeoisement" thesis: that the authors were so clearly determined to challenge. It is then misfortune that they have been

overtaken by events, an account of migrating swallows which is remarkably accurate and intelligent in its statement not only of the facts but also of the reasons for migration. It flies in the face of the theories held by many naturalists at the time, to say nothing of those which he was probably taught in his youth, and it thus gives an interesting indication of the strength of his common sense and discrimination.

When Defoe was about fourteen he was sent to the academy for Dissenters run by the Rev. Charles Morton, an exceptional teacher who happened to hold even more exceptional views on bird migration. At that time, around 1674, Dissenters were debarred from Oxford and Cambridge, and Morton in his large house at Newington Green did his best to give fifty of their sons a university education. "He had", according to Edmund Calamy,

indeed a Peculiar Talent, of winning Youth to the Love of Virtue and Learning, both by his Pleasant Conversation, and by a Familiar Way he had of making difficult Subjects easily Intelligible. One can see from his little didactic works that he understood how to appeal to young pupils. In *The Little Peace-maker*, a spirited dialogue between its protagonists, "Emmetius" peaceable, and "Therminus" hot, hasty, as more people move to the "city" suburbs, the words seem to do change and will have spoken themselves. Had Defoe needed to learn how to write a lively dialogue, he could have done from his tutor.

Morton had been a gifted mathematician at Oxford, and, according to Calamy, a favourite pupil of Bishop Wilkins, the Warden of Wadham, whose entertaining *Mathematical Magick*, published in 1648, devoted the real land-yachts, and hypothetical submarines and flying-machines, to Robert Moore in his life of Defoe gives several instances where Defoe speaks highly of Morton's power as a teacher, particularly of mathematics and science.

Morton was, however, so persecuted by the Church of England and so infested with Processes from the Bishop's Court that he was finally forced to emigrate to Massachusetts in 1685 or 1686. There he became celebrated as a scientific lecturer. Of all teaching rebellious Harvard students (*plus ça change...*) there he eventually became the first to the evolution of particularism. His period, or into the way the system evolved in the other parts of the country, the social and economic conditions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries lie in the history of the board- and of the local authorities which succeeded him. Professor and Mrs. Simon's efforts deserve to be remembered.

There is, strangely enough, nothing about the migration of birds in his *Appendix Physique*, for Morton's most popular published scientific work concerned with nothing else. The story in the heaven known to her appointed times; and the time of the crane, and the swallow, and the time of their coming. Many mentions, two such titles, one which agrees with that of an untraced tract, signed "C.M.", reprinted in *The Harleian Miscellany* (1744, 538-67) and there attributed to John, Donald Wing hints in an untraced cross-reference at publication in 1699, the year after Morton died, but there is some reason, as we will see, for thinking that the book is current by the time Morton went to America. The text quoted here is "The Probable Solution of the Question, Whence come the cranes, and the turtle... By a Person Learning and Piety. Printed for J. Sturges, 1703."

Morton's solution to the problem of the cranes and the turtle, in so far as it is based on non-biblical arguments, is an unwitting form of *reductio ad absurdum*, a process of elimination based almost entirely upon negative evidence. The birds do not go some other part of the Earth, for they did, "it is likely that some one held in one Age or other have discovered the Place". They do not lie

in the Spring Morning, when they should awake, it is scarce conceivable how their feathers should be in a trim to lift them out of Water. And "no curious Persons, inquisitive into the Nature of Things" had been able to "procure any of those sleeping Swallows, to observe the Progress of Nature concerning them". Given these premises, the solution is inescapable: the missing bird

is not in any other Parts of the Earth; and since... it cannot abide six Months in the Air, no more than Noah's Dove, which was as good a flyer, yet wanted a resting Place for the sole of her Foot, it must go unto, and remain in some one of the Celestial Bodies, and that must be the Moon.

Morton admits that this argument may be open to some objections, and launches into them with a fine flourish of mathematics and disregard of observed fact. Objection one: the distance to the Moon (which he has no difficulty in calculating) and the time available for migration (six weeks there and six weeks back) are such that the bird would have to fly

Defoe and the swallows

BY RICHARD GARNETT



Domingo Gonsales's voyage to the moon, from *The Man in the Moon*.

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the Copernican Scheme, and the New Motions of Philosophy, which are yet under Debate; but if all this be mistaken, then so are all your Conjectures.

Not once does Morton offer any evidence based on what he has actually seen birds do, nor does he consider why certain kinds of birds should need to migrate anywhere, let alone to the moon.

William Eagle Clarke in his *Studies in Bird-Migration* (1912) has called this "perhaps the most extraordinary theory ever propounded" on the subject, and with good reason. But Morton's theory, though odd, was not entirely original. His mentor at Oxford, Bishop Wilkins, had probably put it into his head by writing *The Discovery of a World in the Moone* (1638). His thirteenth and fourteenth propositions are "That it is probable there may be inhabitants in this other World; but of what kind they are, is uncertain" and "That it is possible for some of our posterity to finde out a conveyance to this other world, and if there be inhabitants there, to have commerce with them."

While Wilkins was the first man to consider space-travel a scientific possibility, he was not the only bishop to write of the subject at this time. At the very end of the third edition of his book (1640) he remarks:

Having thus finished this discourse, I chanced upon a late fancy to this purpose under the feigned name of *Domingo Gonsales*, written by a late excellent and learned Bishop: in which the said sundry particulars wherein this later Chapter did unwittingly agree with it, there is delivered a very pleasant and well contrived fancy concerning a voyage to this other world.

He supposeth that there is a natural and usual passage for many creatures betwixt our earth and this planet... the supposed the Swallows, Cuckoos, Nightingales, with divers other fowle, which are with us only halfe the year, to flye up thither, when they goe from us.

This "late reverend and learned Bishop" was Francis Godwin, Bishop first of Llandaff and later of Hereford. It is difficult for a modern reader to decide how seriously this charming and well contrived fancy should be taken. It was entitled *The Man in the Moone, or a Discourse of a Voyage Thither* by Domingo Gonsales. The speedy Messenger, and was published in 1638. It tells how Gonsales, "the Little Spaniard", having trained twenty-five "Gansas" or wild swans to lift an engine supported by pulleys of cork, was eventually carried up to the moon and returned in due course to China. Apart from some straightforward explanation of the Copernican system and the laws of gravitation, its chief purpose seems to be to entertain, and "E.M." in his preface notes "To the Ingenious Reader" disarming remarks: "It was not the Authors intention (I presume) to discourse thee into a belief of each particular circumstance."

Whether as a result of these two bishops' writings, or because of Morton's book, the lunar theory was well enough known and serious enough considered by 1687 for Dryden to write of his allegorical swallow in the Third Part of *The Hind and the Panther*:

They try their fluttering wings, and trust themselves in air. But whether upward to the moon they go, Or dream the winter out in caves below, Or hawk at flies elsewhere, concerns us not to know.

But there is no doubt what Defoe thought of the lunar theory and its proponents, "the fine pretenders" as he calls them, for he uses a lively burlesque of it in his political satire, *The Consolidator*, which appeared in 1705. The Consolidator, the aerial chariot by which the moon-voyage is undertaken, is an allegory for the House of Commons, and the 513 feathers by which it is propelled are the members of Parliament.

Although Morton's book seems to have appealed to the general reader, for it was reprinted as late as 1739, eight years after Defoe died, I cannot find that any naturalist took it seriously in the eighteenth century. The official view was divided between Dryden's last two alternatives, hibernation and migration. Many creatures in other branches of the animal kingdom spend the winter in a torpid condition, so that it was not surprising that Aristotle, who recognized that many birds migrate, should

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The new universities

MICHAEL BLOFF: *The Plateglass Universities*. 208pp. Sackor and Wurburg. 30s.
LORD BUTLER: *The Responsibilities of Education*. 162pp. Longmans. 30s.

The Plateglass Universities of Mr. Bloff's title are the new universities of Sussex, York, East Anglia, Essex, Lancaster, Kent at Canterbury, and Warwick (though they are perhaps more widely known as "Baedeker Universities"). The book opens with a sub-tantial misstatement: "The opening of the new universities in the 1960s was the greatest single expansion of higher education that England has ever known. In terms of conscious national policy it was the first." This surely depends upon what is meant by higher education: usually it has been taken to mean some kind of advanced study after leaving school and after the age of eighteen; thus there have been periods of expansion of technical education, of teacher training and of the university population in existing sectors which have had greater effect than that of the opening of the new universities. Looking back just a little before Mr. Bloff's "plateglass" foundations, for example, the inauguration of the colleges of advanced technology was both larger in terms of the number of institutions as well as of the number of students involved. It may also have been much larger in terms of its total effect upon English society.

By higher education Mr. Bloff means universities and this puts his book in a context: that of a view of university policy which is separate from the rest of higher education and which is linked closely to the traditions of Oxford, Cambridge and London. This gives an implausible interpretation of the impact of the new universities on higher education and of the relationship of new universities to the whole pattern of higher education, because it omits several major factors which have influenced them: in particular that they have now opened but have ceased to grow.

In a context of a national higher education policy which embraces more than 200 institutions of different types, drawing their resources from diverse sources and meeting many national, regional and local needs, the attempt to grapple with the need to formulate institutions and policies to make the whole system work adequately causes many strains on individual institutions.

Plateglass Universities falls into three parts. First there is a general description of their foundation and a rough outline of their relationship with the existing university system. Mr. Bloff shows that they are situated, generally speaking, some miles outside fairly small towns; that they have a pattern of studies which attempts to make some kind of radical break with the civic university tradition (particularly that of the University of London); that they were intended from the start as fully-fledged universities rather than as training grounds; that they were meant to be fairly large in size; and that they were deliberately set up to

counter the attractions of prestige universities. He also suggests that they have sometimes willingly courted publicity of a trivial and counter-productive kind. Then follow some chapters describing Mr. Bloff's visits to the new campuses. Clearly he thinks most highly of Warwick, and equally clearly Kent has few attractions for him. Mr. Bloff's accounts of these visits are somewhat vitiated by his concentration on some pointless anecdotes by the students; he also tends to over-emphasize the extent to which the theory of the new degree courses breaks with the theory of past degree courses. Had Mr. Bloff looked at the matter in detail, particularly in the physical and natural sciences, he might well have found much less difference in past and present practice.

Plateglass Universities ends with an epilogue about the relationship of the new universities to the student disturbances of 1968. All in all, it is a perceptive and interesting book; but some important issues are not treated in depth. Who are the dons: where do they come from: why have they chosen to work at these new universities; what were the particular pressures which led the U.G.C. suddenly to set up these universities: why do the students choose degree courses of this kind? Why have the universities become obsessed with the concept of the honours degree and neglected other responsibilities, particularly in the field of professional training at rather lower than honours degree level, which has been such a rewarding field in the United States? Should all students be resident: can the country afford to keep them resident?

Unexpectedly, some of these issues are raised by Lord Butler in *The Responsibilities of Education*, which deals with the relationship between the universities and the professions. The appendixes of the book are immensely interesting since they set out in detail the requirements and qualifications of a large number of professional bodies: accountants, architects, engineers, and so on.

From Lord Butler's penetrating comments on the relationship between professional training and university training, it is clear that in the next twenty years, during which the universities will be under continual pressure to grow at lower and lower unit cost, expansion into the area of professional training and a complete reformulation of the methods and techniques of professional training and of the content of curricula will be of major importance.

This is typified perhaps most strikingly in the case of accountants (the profession which sponsored the book), who play a crucial role in the restructuring of British industry and commerce, and who have been grossly neglected by the formal educational system. In no other country would so important a group of people be largely educated by correspondence while they continued an apprenticeship. The results of this system are visible for all to see in the low standards of management in British industry. Lord Butler's book is of particular importance at the present time; it deserves to be widely read and studied.

Schools then and now

BRIAN SIMON (Editor): *Education in Leicestershire, 1540-1940*. 270pp. Leicester University Press. £2 17s. 6d.

As formal and informal education has come to play an increasing part in the social and economic life of the country, affecting social mobility and the prevailing social tone, and taking an increasing role in economic change, it is clear that part, at least, of the history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (to say nothing of earlier periods) cannot be understood without a detailed treatment of educational history. The sources are there in the archives and cellars of education committees and religious bodies, and in the attics of the families of former members of school boards and local councils. It is extraordinary that very little mine has, as yet, been so very richly tapped. The result is a gap in the development of the understanding of economic, social and intellectual history. A few pioneers have begun to bridge this gap among those who have made major contributions. This latest addition to their already excellent series on local history contains essays on "Town Estates and Schools in Centuries" by Joan Simon, as well as two further essays by her on developments in the country in the post-Restoration period, and on "Was there a Chantry School Movement?"

This last paper is a sustained piece of historical reasoning, based on a detailed study of the sources; it provides local evidence for a reevaluation of the Chantry school movement, which has played a fairly significant part in the interpretation of the late sixteenth and early eighteenth centuries.

Mrs. Simon suggests that the literary evidence is in striking contrast to the surviving local sources, and she argues that the Chantry school movement was not nearly what it seems to have been. Even as late as the 1780s and on into the early nineteenth century, manual workers who do vote Conservative are the more affluent ones. The figures suggest that to some extent they are: men with higher earnings less often voted Labour, as did house-owners compared with tenants, and men who thought their standard of living had improved over the previous decade compared with those who thought theirs had not. But these differences, though they showed up, were not dramatic.

What did make a more striking difference to political attitudes was what Mr. Goldthorpe and his colleagues call "group affiliations". Labour support was particularly weak among men whose fathers or fathers-in-law had white-collar jobs, whose wives had them or who had themselves had them in the past. Likewise, the kind of area that people lived in made a great difference, the support for Labour declining sharply from the scale from older "poor" areas to council estates and from council estates to "superior" private suburbs.

This conclusion, and it is an important one, is this: being better-off financially may perhaps in some circumstances weaken a manual worker's support for Labour, but a much greater influence upon political attitudes and behaviour is the set of social relationships that surrounds him: family, relatives and neighbours. Once stated, this seems entirely convincing; people might well be more influenced by personal contacts than by another couple of pounds in their pay packet. And it is one of the achievements of this monograph that it demonstrates this to be so.

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overtaken by events, an account of migrating swallows which is remarkably accurate and intelligent in its statement not only of the facts but also of the reasons for migration. It flies in the face of the theories held by many naturalists at the time, to say nothing of those which he was probably taught in his youth, and it thus gives an interesting indication of the strength of his common sense and discrimination.

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Morton had been a gifted mathematician at Oxford, and, according to Calamy, a favourite pupil of Bishop Wilkins, the Warden of Wadham, whose entertaining *Mathematical Magick*, published in 1648, devoted the real land-yachts, and hypothetical submarines and flying-machines, to Robert Moore in his life of Defoe gives several instances where Defoe speaks highly of Morton's power as a teacher, particularly of mathematics and science.

Morton was, however, so persecuted by the Church of England and so infested with Processes from the Bishop's Court that he was finally forced to emigrate to Massachusetts in 1685 or 1686. There he became celebrated as a scientific lecturer. Of all teaching rebellious Harvard students (*plus ça change...*) there he eventually became the first to the evolution of particularism. His period, or into the way the system evolved in the other parts of the country, the social and economic conditions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries lie in the history of the board- and of the local authorities which succeeded him. Professor and Mrs. Simon's efforts deserve to be remembered.

There is, strangely enough, nothing about the migration of birds in his *Appendix Physique*, for Morton's most popular published scientific work concerned with nothing else. The story in the heaven known to her appointed times; and the time of the crane, and the swallow, and the time of their coming. Many mentions, two such titles, one which agrees with that of an untraced tract, signed "C.M.", reprinted in *The Harleian Miscellany* (1744, 538-67) and there attributed to John, Donald Wing hints in an untraced cross-reference at publication in 1699, the year after Morton died, but there is some reason, as we will see, for thinking that the book is current by the time Morton went to America. The text quoted here is "The Probable Solution of the Question, Whence come the cranes, and the turtle... By a Person Learning and Piety. Printed for J. Sturges, 1703."

Morton's solution to the problem of the cranes and the turtle, in so far as it is based on non-biblical arguments, is an unwitting form of *reductio ad absurdum*, a process of elimination based almost entirely upon negative evidence. The birds do not go some other part of the Earth, for they did, "it is likely that some one held in one Age or other have discovered the Place". They do not lie

Caste

DIYAMRATA ROSE: *The Indian Society*. 208pp. Popular Prakashan. 10s.

The author, a social worker who is also an expert on caste, has written an excellent and very readable book, which is a welcome addition to the literature on caste. The book is written in a simple and clear style, and is well illustrated with examples and facts. It is a book that should be read by all who are interested in the social structure of India. The author's approach is to look at caste from a social and cultural point of view, rather than from a purely religious or historical one. She discusses the origins of caste, its development over time, and its role in Indian society. She also discusses the efforts to reform caste, and the challenges that remain. The book is a valuable contribution to the study of caste, and is highly recommended.

